

PERSONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT WITH APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY TO INCREASE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

<p>Keywords: Appreciative Inquiry; Employee Engagement; Personal Career Development.</p>	<p>This research aims to increase employee engagement by designing and implementing personal career development planning based on appreciative inquiry at PT. X. Then, personal career development planning activities based on appreciative inquiry gave rise to real action. The method in this research uses an appreciative inquiry approach, with a cycle of define, discovery, dream, design, and destiny with mini workshop media for employees representing each department when planning personal career development. The success of this research is measured by the process of the mini workshop and the outcomes of the intervention provided. The research results showed that the subjects gave an upbeat assessment of the mini-workshop activities and participated with spirit and enthusiasm. Then, the outcomes of this research show that the subjects experienced the impact of change, namely increased engagement from individuals and the implementation of actions that had been designed. In short, personal career development planning carried out by employees provides positive impacts and changes in organizational development.</p>
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Introduction

Employees are essentially one of the elements that become resources in the company. These human resources carry out daily activities. In working, every individual will try to survive and improve performance. (Siregar & Hakim, 2018) Explained that to survive and continue to compete in a career (work), each individual must be more productive, efficient, and effective in a field occupied. This is because every aspect of work requires individuals to work diligently to produce maximum performance in obtaining an output from goods or services. Working productively, efficiently, and effectively, individuals can make the best use of the facilities and infrastructure provided, produce optimal performance, and thus achieve high productivity (Kadarisman, 2019).

Based on the monthly productivity data of PT. From 2022 to 2023, it can be concluded that company X has not optimized its production capacity, which is 46,323 kg per month. It is known that the production capacity of 46,323 kg per month is the result of improvisation carried out by PT. X in increasing production capacity, such as adding tools, improving layouts, and adding labor, cannot be optimized by existing labor. Investments made to increase capacity are still not in line with the increase in productivity. The increase in 2023 shows that productivity can still be optimized. Many consulting institutions believe there is a correlation between the value of strong employee engagement and the performance of the company or institution. Employee engagement is an essential aspect of an organization because employees who feel involved with their

organizational goals are expected to be more productive and have a higher awareness of contributing more to the organization than employees who do not have engagement value. One of the main concerns affecting a company's success is employee engagement. Employee engagement is employees who have an energetic and practical sense of connection with their work activities and see themselves able to face the demands of their jobs well. Due to the needs of business practices, many consulting organizations that conduct continuous research on employee engagement by surveying employers and employees are even used as one of the company's successes (Sun & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019).

A Meta-Analysis (Alkasim & Prahara, 2020) of these 174 studies found a strong positive correlation between employee engagement and performance ($r = .37$). The study also found that the link between engagement and performance was more vital for some aspects of engagement than others, with passion and dedication showing a stronger correlation than absorption.

Generally, there are two positive output contexts of employee engagement in the company: the broad or organizational context and the personal or individual context. Organizationally, employee engagement has a positive impact on company growth and productivity (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009), positive returns to stakeholders (Kujala, Sachs, Leinonen, Heikkinen, & Laude, 2022), and customer satisfaction.

The company's growth includes profits generated from time to time, while the company's productivity includes optimizing effectiveness and efficiency to produce maximum output. Then, a positive return on stakeholders means the benefits or benefits received by all parties involved in an organization or company, such as shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, and the wider community. Furthermore, customer satisfaction means the satisfaction of the service provided by the company to the customer.

Individually, employee engagement has a positive impact on reducing employee turnover, employee performance, and positive behavior. Employee turnover is the turnover period of employees who leave and enter the company. Employee performance is the level of success and effectiveness of employees in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, and the last positive behavior is positive behavior that the company wants, such as actively participating and showing empathy, courage, and perseverance.

Employee engagement is how much employees dedicate their work cognitively, effectively, and psychically to their workplace. Cognitively, engaged employees will try to concentrate and focus on their work so that it produces optimal results. In the affective aspect, employees do not complain easily and assume that the work given at work makes them a burden. Conversely, people with high engagement perceive that the work makes employees proud and gives importance to their lives. Then, psychometrically, employees are willing to go the extra mile without coercion and being asked.

Research shows that employees who have high engagement positively correlate with productivity and company development because they do their work enthusiastically

and do not consider their work a burden (Choudhury & Mohanty, 2019). These employees consider their workplace a comfortable development place and can contribute maximum (Cáceres Orellana, 2022). In addition, employees who have high engagement are committed to completing work entirely and are highly loyal to the workplace. However, most employees globally indicate that they are disengaged from their workplace.

Data analysis conducted by Gallup, a human resource management consulting firm, shows that employee engagement is still suboptimal. Gallup's analysis of 112,312 business units in 96 countries found that employee engagement was still a low percentage. The survey shows that the employee engagement rate in 2021 was 21%, in 2020 it was 20%, and in 2019 it was 22%.

The report also explains that employees who have low engagement levels cause negative feelings such as low satisfaction, sadness, anger, worry, and stress. Concerns about lack of employee engagement can hurt the company, especially when planning to develop and optimize profits. Then, statistical results show that the average employee with a high engagement level affects the company's profit. A report reveals that 21% of company profits increase when the average employee is actively engaged/has a high level of engagement (Putri & Lautania, 2016).

In the same way, PT X conducted an internal company survey on how high the employee engagement rate is on a scale of 1, which means employees have low engagement, and it goes to a score of 5, which means employees have high engagement. The results of the company's internal survey are as follows:

Table 1
Engagement Level

Engagement Level	Value
Satisfaction with compensation and benefits	2.26
Satisfaction with the relationship between employees and management (Organization Policies)	2.96
Satisfaction with Career & Personal Development	2.96
Perilaku Yang Menunjukkan Kepuasan Kerja/Engagement Behavior (Co-Worker Relationship)	3.52
Perceived Job Satisfaction / Engagement Opinion (Workplace Well-Being)	3.27
Satisfaction with Facilities and Work Environment	3.35
Satisfaction with Leadership	3.03

The survey results showed high scores on behavioral aspects that showed job satisfaction/engagement behavior, perceived job satisfaction/engagement opinion, satisfaction with facilities and work environment, and satisfaction with leadership with scores of 3.52, 3.27, 3.35, and 3.03. Then, the fewer aspects are satisfaction with career and personal development, satisfaction with the relationship between employees and management, and satisfaction with compensation and benefits, with scores of 2.96, 2.96, and 2.26. The survey results showed that the average score obtained was 3.05, with the employee category entirely engaged.

Even so, three aspects need to be highlighted so that the level of employee engagement can be optimized. In the aspect of compensation and benefits, it is known

that improvements and changes made to increase employee engagement will affect financial and business conditions; there is no guarantee that employees will stay, feel involved, and be proactive continuously. In addition, according to the theory of intricate motivation, although increased compensation and benefits affect employee compliance in their work, they can backfire on companies because too strong external self-control can reduce meaningfulness and job satisfaction from within.

In the second aspect, satisfaction with the relationship between employees and management is also lacking. In interviews conducted by management, management complained that employees could not understand the company's vision and mission, especially the PT X program, conveyed by superiors. Meanwhile, the interview results with employees explained that superiors were less open and communicated with employees, especially when employees gave input. This can impact caring, involvement, and feelings of belonging within the company.

In the third aspect, satisfaction with career and development also needs to be considered because it significantly impacts employee engagement. According to employees, career development in PT. X company requires less attention, ranging from training, feedback from superiors, and job rotations that are carried out suddenly without communication with employees. Plus, companies do not understand why career development is essential in increasing employee relationships, commitment, and engagement with their organization, and many career development practices are sporadic or more performance-focused than career development. Companies focus more on adapting employees to the job than on career development. Therefore, there is a suspicion that employees may contribute to their abilities and skills but not their hearts and minds. (Li et al., 2023) This meta-analysis of 50 studies found that employee engagement was positively correlated with career development ($r = .42$). The study also found that the link between engagement and career development was more vital for some aspects of engagement than others, with passion and dedication showing a stronger correlation than absorption.

The conclusion of the review of the problems of the three aspects above, among others, is that the addition of compensation and benefits can reduce business stability and the suspicion to eliminate the meaning of work, lack of two-way communication between leaders and employees and minimal career development programs in the environment. Therefore, one alternative to solve PT X's problems and increase employee engagement is a personal career development planning intervention with an appreciative inquiry approach.

Career development is essential because individuals seek direction and an understanding of what a successful career means to them in today's uncertain world. This is an essential part of employee engagement. Career development programs should help employees build a sustainable, future-proof, and adaptable approach to managing their careers.

Career development is a process in which employees develop through a series of stages, each characterized by a different set of developmental tasks, activities, and

relationships. According to (Robianto and Masdupi, 2020), career development is a formal approach organizations use to ensure that people with the right qualifications and experience are available when needed. Although, in general, career development is more towards the individual, overall support from colleagues, superiors, and organizations is the key to the success of career development programs. Therefore, the Appreciative inquiry approach can be applied to make the career development program successful.

Appreciative inquiry is an overall transformative process for an organization to achieve its goals. The appreciative inquiry approach begins with discovering existing strengths to be utilized to achieve desired goals. These strengths can be togetherness, kinship, caring, cooperation, and so on found by the individual through an in-depth search in one forum.

Regarding career development, appreciative inquiry helps provide concrete steps to realize the program. Argue that success in a program requires introduction and preparation in conducting appreciative inquiry because most employees will focus on shortcomings rather than optimizing their strengths. Therefore, beware of the negative bias of the first framing because excellence is not the opposite of failure. Therefore, the appreciative inquiry approach will provide optimal results in employee career development so that employee involvement increases.

Previous studies have revealed that the appreciative inquiry approach highlights individual reflexivity, narratives built together, and expectations to be aimed at so that individual and organizational positive change efforts can successfully run smoothly (Kaye Hart, Conklin, & Allen, 2008). The involvement of employees and their volunteerism in telling positive stories builds harmonious relationships so that the program to be planned can be realized.

Research Methods

The design that will be used in this study is to use action research that will be carried out in the organization. Action research is traditionally defined as a research approach based on collaborative problem-solving relationships between researchers and clients that aim to solve problems and generate new knowledge. Action research is valuable in organizations because it is a collaborative and participatory approach to addressing the organization's problem or challenge. This method involves all organizational stakeholders, including employees, managers, and other stakeholders, in identifying and addressing operations, processes, or organizational culture issues.

In conducting research, action research methods require researchers to observe, explore data, and synthesize the data results. Action research also involves researchers with subjects needed to solve problems. Furthermore, in the experience of many researchers who use action research, there is no same theory in practice. For this reason, it is a challenge for researchers to apply knowledge through theory in social contexts to empower it.

In general, action research is divided into two kinds. Traditional action research focuses on problems by identifying problems, formulating solutions, and solving

problems. Strength-focused action research is called appreciative inquiry, which involves appreciating what is, dreaming, designing or planning, and realizing it. In this research, the approach will be used for career development interventions.

Appreciative inquiry is a methodology that facilitates inspection and construction. As a strengths-based and highly engaged approach to organizational change, AI focuses on aligning organizational strengths with opportunities, aspirations, and desired outcomes and turning goals into actions that drive organizational learning at its core.

Research results are assessed and analyzed to see how far the organizational change program will be successful and effective. Therefore, researchers assess the results of evaluating organizational development programs with career development through 2 methods, including quantitative methods through employee engagement measuring tools developed and prepared by researchers.

Results and Discussion

The intervention results in this study were measured using two methods, namely quantitative research measurement and qualitative measurement. The purpose of measuring in two ways is to get a complete and comprehensive picture of the results.

Table 2
Normality Test

Tests of Normality					
Result	Post-test	Post-test	Shapiro-Wilk		
			Statistic	Df	Sig.
	Pretest		.972	7	.913
	Posttest		.965	7	.857

Table 2 above shows that the df value (degree of freedom) for pre-test and post-test is 7. This means the number of data samples for each is less than 50. So, using the Shapiro-Wilk technique to detect average data in this study can be considered appropriate. Then, from the output, it is known that the Sig. The value for the pre-test is 0.913, and the Sig. The value for the post-test is 0.857. Because the Sig. Value for the two groups is >0.05; as the basis for decision-making in the Shapiro-Wilk normality test above, it can be concluded that the data of the pre-test and post-test results are normally distributed.

Table 3
Uji Sample T-test

Paired Samples Test						Significance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Pre-test – Post-test	-51571	.12856	.04859	-10.613	6	<.001	<.001

Based on the paired output table of the t-test sample above, it is known that the value of Sig. is $0.001 < 0.05$, then H_0 is rejected, and H_a is accepted. So, it can be concluded that there is an average difference between the pre-test and post-test results, which means that the intervention influences increasing engagement.

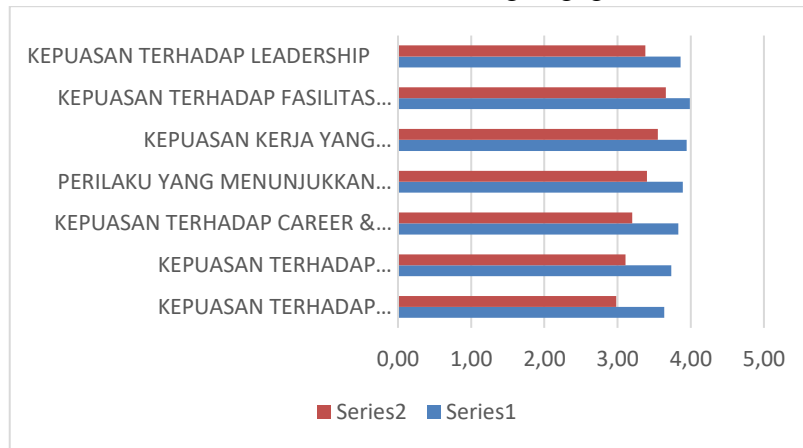


Figure 2 Kepuasan Fasilitas

From the picture above, you can see the increase in each aspect of engagement. The compensation and benefit aspect experienced the highest increase of 0.66 from 2.98 to 3.64. At the same time, satisfaction with the relationship between employees and management and career development has the same increase of 0.63. Behavior that showed job satisfaction increased by 0.49. Satisfaction with leaders increased by 0.48, higher than the satisfaction aspect of perceived job satisfaction, which was 0.39. A low increase occurred in satisfaction with the work environment and facilities, which was 0.33. Engagement has increased in every aspect.

Conclusion

Research on increasing employee engagement at PT. X concludes that career development planning and personal development plan interventions utilizing appreciative inquiry enhance employee engagement by improving leaders' abilities to manage strengths, fostering increased interaction between superiors and subordinates, thus establishing effective communication channels.

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